medium projects are functioning in the private sector.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Yes, Sir. The Government is encouraging small scale sector through a variety of steps like reservation of 821 items for exclusive manufacture in small scale sector, price preference in Government purchase, excise exemption, provision of infrastructure through a Scheme of Integrated Infrastructure Development (IID), provision of transport subsidy in backward area, priority lending by banks etc.

Financial viability of infrastructure sector projects

2355. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per recent reports, it was stated that the lack of financial viability of projects in the infrastructure sector was due to lack of a proper approach on regulatory and policy frame work; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) and (b) The Expert Group on commercialisation of Infrastructure Projects under the Chairmanship of Dr. Rakesh Mohan has made several recommendations relating to the regulatory and policy framework for infrastructure projects.

The Government is of the view that a strong regulatory framework is necessary to attract private investment in the infrastructure sector. Accordingly, the Government has implmented a number of recommendations of the Expert Group, including, inter-alia, the establishment of independent regulatory authorities such as Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) and Tariff Authority for Major Ports (TAMP). In the context of the power sector, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission has been established with enabling provisions to facilitate state governments to set up state regulatory commissions.

Privatisation of PSUs

2356. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a new radical formula has been evolved for privatising public sector enterprises to achieve the desired disinvestment;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the formulation is fraught with dangers, giving unfettered powers of control of public undertakings to the bureaucracy and eliminating their accountability to Parliament; and

(d) if not, what checks are contemplated on such powers, so as to ensure accountability?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SAINGH BADAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Revival of National Instruments Limited and BOGL

2357. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the revival status of National Instruments Limited and BOGL as per the latest proceedings of BIFR;

(b) when were the last BIFR hearing held in the above cases; and

(c) Government's latest stand as promoter vis-a-vis the above hearings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SAINGH BADAL): (a) to (c) National Instruments Ltd. (NIL): The

last hearing of BIFR on National Instruments Limited (NIL) was held on 13.8.97. As per directions of BIFR Management of NIL prepared a comprehensive Rehabilitation Proposal for consideration of Administrative Ministry and Operating Agency (OA). A meeting was convened by OA on 9.9.98 to consider the Rehabilitation Proposal of NIL and evolve an agreed package with all concerned parties. Based on discussions and the response from the concerned parties, OA submitted its Rehabilitation Scheme to BIFR on 30.10.98. BIFR has to consider the same.

Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Ltd. (BOGL): The last hearing of BIFR was held on 17.10.97 in which BIFR decided to allow one month's time to the company as well as the workers' union to prepare a comprehensive scheme and convince the Government of India as well as OA regarding revivability of the company. BOGL submitted a revival scheme to Department of Heavy Industry (DHI) on 19.11.97. Discussions were held on 2.12.97 in DHI with the representatives of OA and BOGL. After examination, it was concluded that the revival plan submitted by BOGL in pursuance of the directions of BIFR would not ensure sustained viability of the company. The views of the Government have been communicated to the BIFR. BIFR is yet to take a final view.

Patents Bill

2358. SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Finance Minister in his statement during his recent visit to France has stated that India will decide on its approach to the patent issue within next two weeks;

(b) whether the inter-Ministerial Group for the purpose has submitted its report;

(c) if so, the salient findings of the Group; and

(d) whether the Finance Ministry has persuaded the Commerce Ministry to pass the amended Patents Bill during the current Session of Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) to (d) A Bill, namely, the Patents (Amendment) Bill, 1998 has been introduced in Parliament (Rajya Sabha) on 16 December, 1998.

खादी और ग्रामोद्योग आयोग में रोजगार की संभाव्यता

2359. **श्री बलवन्त सिंह रामूवालिया:** क्या उद्योग मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि खादी और ग्रामोद्योग आयोग का वार्षिक बजट 600 करोड़ रुपये होने का अनुमान है;

(ख) यदि नहीं, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) क्या यह भी सच है कि इस धनराशि के निवेश के उपरांत केवल 60 लाख लोगों को ही रोजगार उपलब्ध हुआ है;

(घ) यदि नहीं, तो इस संबंध में तत्व क्या हैं और क्या सरकार ने रोजगार के अधिक अवसर पैदा करने की संभावनाओं का पता लगाया है; और

(ङ) यदि हां, तो वह संभावनाएं क्या हैं और सरकार द्वारा उन संभावनाओं के वास्तविक कार्यान्वयन के क्या कदम उठाए गए हैं?

उद्योग मंत्री (श्री सिकन्दर बख्त): (क) जी, हां। वर्ष 1998-99 के लिए खादी और ग्रामोद्योग आयोग का वार्षिक बजट प्रावधान 683.14 करोड़ रुपये है।

(ख) उपर्युक्त भाग (क) के उत्तर मद्देनजर प्रश्न ही नहीं उठता है।

(ग) खादी और ग्रामोद्योग आयोग ने खादी और ग्रामोद्योग क्षेत्र में वर्ष 1997-98 तक 60.15 लाख रोजगारों का सृजन किया है।

(घ) और (ङ) उपर्युक्त भाग (ग) के उत्तर के मद्देनजर प्रश्न ही नहीं उठता है।